

no one noticed

Posted originally on the [Archive of Our Own](https://archiveofourown.org/works/76089501) at <https://archiveofourown.org/works/76089501>.

Rating:	Not Rated
Archive Warning:	Creator Chose Not To Use Archive Warnings
Category:	M/M
Fandoms:	Heated Rivalry (TV) , Game Changers Series - Rachel Reid
Relationship:	Shane Hollander/Ilya Rozanov
Characters:	Shane Hollander , Ilya Rozanov
Additional Tags:	Hurt/Comfort , Sickfic , Sick Character , Hockey , Vomiting , Soft Ilya , because he is so dear to me , Ilya Rozanov Loves Shane Hollander , POV Ilya Rozanov
Language:	English
Stats:	Published: 2025-12-20 Words: 3,977 Chapters: 1/1

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by [residentrookie](#)

Summary

It's the night of the Boston vs Montreal game, and Shane Hollander isn't letting whatever illness he's contracted stop him from getting out on the ice, no matter how sick he actually is. Ilya Rozanov, it seems, is the only person who notices.

Whatever that means.

Notes

i'm back sooner than expected. this entire fic is literally just ilya being adorably concerned about (see also: obsessed with) shane. in my head, this takes place in heated rivalry after they've gotten into their hookup rhythm but before all the rose landry stuff goes down. ok that's all from me! enjoy!

See the end of the work for [more notes](#)

The Boston vs Montreal game starts in approximately two hours, and all Ilya can focus on is the impending text telling him the hotel room number he'll be able to find Shane Hollander in later tonight.

He'd sent the text off almost twenty minutes ago and is still waiting impatiently for a response, looking down to check his phone every few seconds like an eager fool. But honestly, he had a difficult time understanding Shane's delay. Wasn't Hollander tired of playing hard to get? They'd been doing this dance for so long now, there was really no point pretending they didn't know exactly where they were going to end up after their game— or exactly *what* they'd be doing.

Well, maybe not *exactly*. Ilya had some creative new ideas to try with Shane tonight, all buzzing for his attention somewhere in the back of his brain while he forced himself to focus on hockey first. Sex, if nothing else between Ilya and Shane, was really very simple, an evergreen fount of enjoyment and exploration with no place for judgement or shame— just delicious, mutual satisfaction. For such a complicated situation, their set up was strikingly simple. Win or lose, the sex was either a hard-fought reward or a consolation prize. And always, no matter what, *so* fucking hot.

Ilya huffs, pocketing his silent phone as he walks to the press room for a quick pre-game interview. The hallway is completely abandoned until Ilya turns a corner to see none other than Montreal's Captain, Shane Hollander, leaning precariously over a trashcan, gripping the sides a little too tightly to be casual.

Bewildered, Ilya stops in his tracks to watch. Shane just stays there, his broad, toned shoulders moving beneath the material of his gray muscle shirt while he takes measured breaths. Ilya knows he believes himself to be completely alone because from what he can see of Shane's expression, the man looks like he's fighting for his fucking life to stay standing.

Interesting.

"Hollander?" Ilya calls, his tone just shy of taunting.

Shane whirls, a hand flying up to his mouth and swiping quickly.

“Rozanov,” Shane replies. He straightens, as if merely talking to Ilya requires a mental *and* physical readiness, and Ilya smirks, pleased to know he has this effect.

After a moment of silence Ilya revels in, he gestures to the trashcan Shane still hasn’t moved away from completely. “What were you doing?”

“I, um.” Shane glances from Ilya to the trashcan nervously. “I... I dropped my hotel key. Down the— down *there*. So. I was looking for it.”

“Ah.” Ilya nods, amused. All these years later, and Shane is still *such* a shitty liar. It delights him.

Ilya takes a step closer and Shane copies him, moving the slightest bit in front of the trashcan. His stance is oddly... protective.

What the fuck are you hiding, Hollander? Ilya thinks, and closes more distance between them.

He can see Shane’s features a bit better from here, and what he sees is frankly alarming. There are dark smudges beneath his eyes, and even taking into account the shitty fluorescent light from this hallway, his coloring is off by several shades. Beads of sweat have formed across his forehead, soaking his hairline, and the slightest tremors seem to be running through his body. There’s simply no way around it— the man is ill. Really fucking ill.

And, since he’s clearly just left the press room Ilya is now on his way to, Shane has every intention of playing tonight.

Fucking Hollander. You know better than to play sick, idiot.

Considering the stupidly determined look on Shane's face mixed with his general inability to back down from a challenge of any kind, *especially* when it comes to him, Ilya knows he'd be wasting his breath trying to talk sense into Hollander.

But that doesn't mean Ilya can't fuck with him about it.

"What?" Shane asks testily when Ilya makes no move to leave.

"You are not going to fetch it?" Ilya asks. "The hotel key?"

"Huh? Oh. Um." Shane glances down at the trashcan with dread.

"Is not a very big trashcan," Ilya points out helpfully. "You could probably just reach your arm down and—"

"No, you know what? It's fine. I'll just get a new one from the front desk. No problem."

"Whatever you say," Ilya says with a grin.

After another weighted pause, Shane glares at Ilya pointedly. "Is there something I can do for you, Rozanov?"

"Yes, actually. Answer me this: why is it you seem so nervous, Hollander?"

"I'm not fucking nervous."

"No? But you are all pale and sweaty. Is it me? Scared for our face off on the ice? You know I have won more against you in total. Would be natural to be worried."

At this, Shane scoffs. “Oh, fuck you. I’ve *never* been nervous to play you, and I never fucking will be. And your math, by the way, is totally bullshit. If anything, we’re tied.”

Ilya leans against the wall, stuffing his hands in his pockets. “If you are not nervous then what is the matter with you, hm? I have seen ghosts with better color.”

“*Nothing*— look, can you fuck off? We play each other in, like, an hour, we can save this for the ice.”

So Shane is a professional hockey player *and* question dodger, it seems.

Ilya decides to take a more direct route. “Your teammates do not mind playing with a sick captain, then? They are happy to lose this way?”

Shane’s expression hardens. “Fucking watch it, Rozanov. I’m perfectly capable of leading my team tonight. You’ll understand that better after we beat your ass.”

“We will see, won’t we?” Ilya pushes himself upright and continues his journey to the press room, intending to knock Shane’s shoulder with his own as he walks by, but stopping short—stopping altogether— when he gets close enough to. For the first time in all Ilya’s years of knowing Shane, he looks physically fragile. As though one wrong move could send him toppling to the floor.

And forgetting the competition, forgetting the nature of their rivalry— the Hollander vs. Rozanov narrative constructed by the league and publicly performed by the two of them— Ilya cannot fight off the genuine concern blossoming in his chest over this idiot.

“Drink water,” he orders Shane firmly, and walks away before the other man can tell him to fuck off again.

A little over an hour later, both teams are out on the ice, stretching and running drills. Ilya is admittedly distracted after his encounter with Shane earlier, glancing over every couple of seconds to look for any indication that the Montreal captain's health is impacting his play. Shane, however, seems to be spending most of his time stretching rather than doing drills.

Because he does not feel well and wants to save energy? Ilya muses. Or because he doesn't need drills to be fucking unstoppable?

Ilya is slightly worried he's overthinking this.

His inaction must be somewhat noticeable because Cliff skates up to him, a curious look on his face. "You wanna pass some, Roz?"

Ilya nods, and the two begin a passing drill.

"You okay?" Cliff asks after a moment. "You're kind of quiet tonight."

"Am fine," Ilya says shortly. "Is just..." he glances over at Montreal quickly, then back to Cliff. "Have you noticed Hollander acting strange? I think he is playing hurt or sick or something."

Ilya hopes he doesn't sound overly invested in this observation, but instead like a captain assessing his opponent for weaknesses.

"Hollander?" Cliff looks over at the other team, scanning the ice for Shane. "Nah, man, I watched his pre-game press clip. He looked the same as he always does. Uptight, prickish, promising to beat the shit out of us— you know how he is."

Ilya frowns. He cannot comprehend anyone seeing Shane moments before the trashcan fiasco and believing him to be completely *fine*— in fact, Ilya recalls being vaguely worried that Hollander might collapse on the spot. However, Cliff is famously unobservant, so perhaps he isn't the best judge.

"Hm," is all Ilya responds, and does his very best to focus on passing the puck.

It's a bad idea. Ilya knows that before he skates to the bench, stepping off the rink, walking all the way down to where the two teams meet and taking a seat— conveniently right next to Montreal's Hayden Pike, an average player and a terrible conversationalist in Ilya's esteemed opinion. He is also, for unknowable reasons, Shane Hollander's best friend. And therefore a person of interest to Ilya.

"Pike," Ilya addresses the other man, who looks up with furrowed brows and promptly gawks at him for having the audacity to speak to Hayden before a game.

"Fuck outta here, Rozanov," says Hayden with a sharp glare.

"Your captain does not look so good," Ilya says plainly. This statement of course is taken by Hayden with mighty offense.

"He looks better than you on your best fucking day," Pike retorts.

Ilya is instantly bored of this conversation. "You are not hearing me. He looks ill. Sick."

Hayden just stares at him incredulously. "He— what? No he doesn't! We were just talking, and he's completely fine. What the fuck are you playing at?"

Jesus Christ. Was Ilya the only person with fucking eyes?

“I am playing at nothing. In fact, I am doing your job for you. You should notice these things. Your captain takes care of you, you take care of your captain. Is... symbiotic relationship.”

Ilya stumbles a bit over the word, having never actually spoken it aloud before. He only learned it last week from when it popped up in his daily crossword puzzle.

Hayden looks at him as if he’s sprouted another head from his neck. “Fucking *what?*”

“*Chert voz'mi.* Nevermind,” Ilya says darkly, standing to make his way back to the ice.

“Why do you care if Shane is sick anyway, Rozanov?” Pike calls to his back. “Doesn’t that just make your job easier?”

Finally asking good questions, Hayden Pike.

Ilya is careful to rearrange his features into something cocky and insufferable. “Easier? Yes. But is no fun to skate circles around a man who cannot keep up. That is not called victory. That is called an ass kicking”

The first period went exactly as Ilya expected: brilliantly for Boston and tragically for Shane Hollander.

He was playing about as well as you would expect a man to play who was probably vomiting his guts up until the second he stepped on the ice. Actually, Ilya knew he was performing a lot better than an average player would, but still. Not the Shane-Hollander-level-perfection he usually operated at. He was sluggish and uncoordinated compared to the striking cobra he usually was on the ice, all precision and speed.

For the life of him, Ilya just can't understand Shane's motivation behind playing out this horrible game. If he truly wanted to beat Ilya so badly, he had to realize that a half-ass performance against Ilya playing his best absolutely wasn't going to cut it and never would. No, Shane's reasoning had to do with more than just him, Ilya knows. This stubbornness speaks to his relationship with the game of hockey at large, the enormous pressures he puts on himself to succeed, to operate at an untouchable level— this is just one of the many fucking ridiculous things Shane would do to secure a victory.

Ilya grasps this at a surface level, but can't quite fathom it.

What the fuck does he really have to prove? Ilya can't stop himself from wondering. Why can't he admit he is dying and sit this game out on the fucking bench like a normal person?

"You are playing like shit," Ilya hisses in Shane's ear at one point, pinning him against the board as he battles for the puck. "You are not embarrassed?"

"Fuck. You." Shane grunts, but loses the puck, instead trailing after Ilya with a muttered curse.

Later, they find themselves pressed against the boards again and Ilya can't help but nail in his point further. "What will it take, huh? Four Boston goals? Five? When will you realize you cannot win and stop being fucking stupid?"

"Shut the fuck up," Shane growls, but his breathlessness undermines his aggression.

Ilya scores yet another goal after that, bumping Boston's total score up to four. Montreal trails far behind with zero.

At the face off, Ilya takes Shane in— the pale shade of his lips, the sweat pouring from his brow, the dazed, exhausted look in his eyes— and shakes his head.

“You will collapse,” Ilya warns him severely. His eyes seek out Shane’s, forgetting almost entirely that a puck will drop down on the ice in between them any second, and it’s his job to secure it. Right now, that seems secondary. “You will slam your head on the ice and give yourself concussion. That is what you want, Hollander? To be out for the next few games, maybe even playoffs?”

“Please,” Shane whispers, his eyes never leaving the ice. “Please just don’t.”

“Why not?” Ilya challenges. “Know when to quit. Know when you cannot give more. Is sign of a *good* captain, not a weak one.”

Ilya doesn’t know why he cares so much that Shane takes the bench and sits out the rest of the game. Shane’s poor performance will only make him look better in the media’s eyes. But he doesn’t give a fuck about that, and he meant what he said to Hayden— there’s no pride in winning a game against sick player who’s unable to give their best performance. What he truly wants is for Shane to see reason, to stop putting his health at risk for a stupid fucking game and stand up for himself.

“Don’t pretend,” Shane huffs, “that you wouldn’t do the exact same thing in my position.”

“I would not,” Ilya says, then smirks. “Russians do not get sick.”

To no one’s surprise, Ilya wins the faceoff.

After the game— the total beatdown of Montreal, more like— it hits Ilya why exactly he never got an answer to his text earlier that day. Shane was probably throwing up in a trashcan right around the time Ilya had sent the message.

Shane is probably throwing up in a trashcan right now, Ilya reminds himself with a frown.

And for some reason, that simply will not do. Ilya's fingers are flying across his screen before he even has time to realize what he's doing— or why he feels so insistent on doing it.

10:21 Lily

Room number. Send. Now.

10:27 Lily

??????????

10:40 Jane

Fuck off.

10:42 Lily

Good, you are alive.

10:42 Lily

Send me your room number before I make a scene you will not like.

Ilya isn't even sure what he means by that threat, but Shane is either too wary of his spontaneity to risk it or too exhausted to try fighting back.

10:50 Jane

1054. Don't come. Please.

Ilya disregards Shane's plea.

Shane answers on the fifth knock. Ilya probably should have left after the third, hell, maybe even the second, but instead he stood outside of Shane's door, risking exposure and making a complete fool of himself for reasons he wasn't ready to examine.

The second he hears the lock turn, he's pushing the door open and shutting it quickly behind him with an exhale. Shane is standing before him— well, sort of. He's *leaning*, caving in on himself and clearly well on his way back to assuming a horizontal position, if the rumpled covers on the bed are any indication of the spot he just vacated.

"Told you not to come," Shane mutters, miserable. "Why don't you ever listen to me?"

"Sob a fucking river, Hollander," Ilya says dismissively.

"Not the saying."

Ilya ignores him, surveying the room. It's a mess, the first of many alarming indications that all is not well with Shane Hollander, neat freak extraordinaire. His clothes are strewn about the room rather than folded and placed somewhere unobtrusive and there's trash lying around in places *outside* of the trashcan and it looks like every hotel room Ilya has ever stayed in, which is exactly why he's worried.

There's Gatorade and water on the nightstand, so he's at least attempting to stay hydrated. That's encouraging.

It also looks like Shane's dragged the trashcan out from the bathroom to take up residence next to his bed. Less encouraging.

Shane is truly tilting when he says, "I really don't think I can stand—"

Ilya wastes no time, grabbing Shane's elbow and walking him hurriedly back to the bed where he plops down next to him. He surveys Shane silently, partially to check for damages and partially because now that he's here, he actually has no clue what he's fucking doing.

After a moment, Shane speaks.

"I am... sick."

Shane's albeit unnecessary admission comes out pathetic and — fuck it, *fine*— adorable, the way he ducks his head shyly and his eyebrows droop down to press closer together. So disappointed in himself for this failure, so sure his immune system was unbeatable as his scoring average.

"You don't say," Ilya's tone is dry and teasing, drawing up Shane's pathetically adorable eyes to his face.

Finally, Ilya thinks, *finally*, *you look me in the eye. I have been waiting all day for this.*

Shane's eyes are twin pools of darkness, blinking slowly at Ilya with a mixture of watered down contempt and... desire? Yes, there is definitely desire there, even now, and fuck it if a flare of longing didn't just shoot through Ilya with a pleasant, tingling jolt.

But just as quickly, Shane looks away, and that electrifying feeling coursing through Ilya fades to an echo. That brief exchange, the flash of eyes, there then gone, the touch of bodies, together then apart, mirrors their entire relationship.

"Look, Rozanov" Shane starts, more hesitant than Ilya would prefer. He straightens, instantly wary. "I'm— I don't think we," Shane curses, shaking his head weakly.

Suddenly Ilya is not sure where Hollander is going with this.

“I’m sorry, but I can’t— *we* can’t—”

“Fucking hell, Hollander, spit it out.”

“I can’t have sex with you tonight,” he confesses in a rush.

Ilya rolls his eyes, doing his best to ignore the relief spreading in his chest. *No fucking shit*, he wants to say. But something about Shane’s defeated (disappointed, even?) tone prevents him.

Shane keeps going. “So if that’s why you’re here—”

“Am not here to fuck you, no. A baby deer would have more stamina than you right now, you realize this, yes?”

“Don’t comp-compare me— mmph *shit*—” Shane moves with impressive speed to get his head over the trash just in time. Coincidentally, this movement means his torso is now draped over Ilya’s lap.

And fine, he’ll say it. This is *not* what Ilya imagined Shane would be doing in his lap this evening. Or any evening, really. Since walking through that hotel room door tonight, Ilya feels like he’s entered a strange dream world where Shane is not (only) an object of his sexual fantasies, but instead someone he wants to... care for, he supposes.

It hits him, then, how much he actually means that. He *cares* about Hollander. The person, not the player. Cares about his health, cares about his pleasure, cares about whatever stupid fucking diet he’s doing, cares when he’s boarded up in his hotel room after playing a game sick and reaping the consequences. Ilya Rozanov cares about Shane Hollander.

Whatever that fucking says about him.

Ilya is frozen for a fraction of a second before instinct takes over and his hands land on Shane's back as he gags, stroking it in wide, slow circles.

"Shh," he says softly, hoping his voice sounds soothing. This sort of thing doesn't come naturally to him, he doesn't think. "Is okay. Just breathe. That's it. Slowly."

One hand finds the hem of Shane's shirt and Ilya nearly shudders at the feeling of Shane's hot, smooth skin beneath his cool fingers, the knobs of his spine and curve of his ribs. Shane's self control isn't quite as good as Ilya's at the moment, and his whole body shivers at the contact.

"Fuck, Rozanov, I'm sorry," Shane moans. "This is so fucking gross." His cheek is now pressed against Ilya's knee and scalding, the heat soaking in through his sweatpants down to his skin.

Ilya's fingers slide into Shane's silky hair. "Don't be sorry. Is not your fault."

"I shouldn't have played. You t-told me that, and I didn't listen. Now I feel like fucking shit because I pushed it too far."

"Eh, okay. Is maybe your fault. Having a high hockey IQ doesn't make you genius in real life, but this is no surprise. You are fucking your rival in secret so you cannot be that smart."

"Except I'm not the one," Shane grimaces, "doing the fucking."

"Your mouth disagrees, Hollander."

Shane's *mouth* is now fighting a smile, and the sight of it might just be melting Ilya's heart.

"Up," Ilya nudges him. "Drink some water. Rinse."

The bottle Ilya passes him shakes a bit in his hands, but he takes it obediently and hobbles over to the bathroom, disappearing behind the door as the sound of water running fills the room.

A few seconds later Shane emerges looking more like himself — by that, Ilya means he looks awkward and stiff— and flops back down next to him with a groan.

“Rozanov?” Shane’s voice is a rasp.

“Yes?”

“Did you really just come all the way over here to say ‘I told you so?’”

Ilya smiles. He hadn’t actually said those words aloud, but of course Shane heard them anyway, as if they were implied by Ilya’s presence alone.

“No,” Ilya reaches into the plastic bag he brought with him. “Came to give you this.”

He pulls out his hand, brandishing a mostly still-cold can of—

“Ginger ale?” Shane’s eyes widen. “Where did you...? They don’t have any in the hotel, I asked.”

No they did not. But the convenience store down the street had plenty. Ilya chooses not to share this tidbit of information, of course.

“Yes, they did. You did not ask nicely enough. Here.”

He nudges the drink against Shane's hand and he seems to wake up a little, grabbing for the can with eager fingers and popping open the tab. Ilya tries (and fails) not to fixate on the way Shane's throat moves as he swallows it down.

"Think I should probably sleep," Shane tells him groggily. "Or at least try to. God, it's going to be so miserable getting up for our flight tomorrow."

"Yes, you should rest. Try to recover from the ass kicking we gave you."

This jab earns Ilya a glare. "Next game, I'm giving you hell, Rozanov. Watch your fucking back."

"And after the next game?" Ilya murmurs, his voice dropping low. "Will you reward me for my saintly patience? I had plans for us tonight, Hollander, that I might not be so generous to try next time."

This is, of course, a lie. But he loves the way Shane's breath seemed to hitch at the insinuation, pupils blown wide at the mere suggestion of Ilya's plans.

"You couldn't hold out on me if you tried," Shane says, somewhat breathless.

True.

"That is what you think."

Ilya winks, rises, and heads to the door. He wishes he could open it and leave without looking back, and maybe in the past he could have but. Not anymore.

He turns back with a smirk. "Til next time, Hollander. Feel better."

And Ilya hopes with all his heart the smirk does a good enough job of hiding just how much he actually means that.

End Notes

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